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AMCONSUL OPORTO

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DIA WASHDC

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TAGS: PFOR PO VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT VISITS PORTUGAL

SUMMARY: DURING HIS NOV 29-30 VISIT TO PORTUGAL, VENEZUELAN
PRESIDENT PEREZ VIGOROUSLY DEFENDED OPEC PRICING POLICY AS
BEING IN THE INTERESTS OF PORTUGAL AND THE THIRD WORLD.

DESPITE HEAVY EMPHASIS UPON ECONOMIC TOPICS, BOTH PEREZ

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AND HIS PORTUGUESE HOSTS HAD POLITICAL OBJECTIVES IN MIND.

THE VISIT UNDERScoreD STRENGTHENED PORTUGUESE TIES TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE THIRD WORLD AND LAYS THE GROUNDWORK FOR EXPANDING BILATERAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. PORTUGAL WELCOMES PEREZ:

VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ VISITED PORTUGAL NOV 29-30. IN ADDITION TO MRS PEREZ, THE OFFICIAL PARTY INCLUDED: FOREIGN MINISTER RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM; MINISTER FOR BASIC PRODUCTION CARMELO LAURIA; AND FOREIGN COMMERCE INSTITUTE PRESIDENT REINALDO FIGUEIREDO PLANCHART. THE VISIT DOMINATED THE LOCAL MEDIA. THE CRAMMED SCHEDULE INCLUDED:

- MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT EANES AND PRIME MINISTER SOARES.
- AN ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
- RECEPTIONS FOR PRESIDENT EANES AND THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS.
- A CONCLUDING PRESS CONFERENCE, ATTENDED BY SOARES.

2. PEREZ DEFENDS OPEC: PRESIDENT PEREZ QUICKLY DISPELLED ANY NOTION THAT HIS GOVERNMENT MIGHT BREACH OPEC DISCIPLINE TO PROVIDE PREFERENTIAL PRICES TO PORTUGAL. HE PARRIED ALL SUCH SUGGESTIONS BY REFERRING TO OPEC FINANCING FACILITIES ALREADY AVAILABLE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, INCLUDING PORTUGAL. PEREZ REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE JUSTICE OF OPEC POLICIES. PRICES WERE RAISED, HE ASSERTED, NOT TO EXPLOIT A MONOPOLY POSITION BUT RATHER TO PROMOTE EQUITABLE TERMS OF TRADE FOR ALL PRODUCERS OF BASIC PRODUCTS. OPEC THUS WAS CARRYING ON A STRUGGLE FOR ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

3. PEREZ ON NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE:

SPEAKING TO THE ASSEMBLED PRESS NOV 30, PRESIDENT PEREZ REFERRED TO THE NORTH-SOUTH CONFERENCE WITH GUARDED OPTIMISM. "WE, THE MEMBERS OF OPEC AND THE THIRD WORLD IN GENERAL, HAVE PLACED OUR CONFIDENCE IN THE RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE." BUT, HE CAUTIONED, LITTLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES REMAINS HARD AND INFLEXIBLE. NEVERTHELESS, HE ADDED, THERE NOW IS A NEW VERY IMPORTANT FACTOR, THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN THE UNITED STATES, WHICH COULD ADOPT A DIFFERENT POSITION.

4. ACCENT UPON ECONOMICS: THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENTS EANES AND PEREZ AT THE VISIT'S CONCLUSION STRESSED AREAS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION: THE DOCUMENT:

- DEFENDED THE ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY OF ALL NATIONS OVER THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES;
- CALLED FOR A "NEW ECONOMIC ORDER" AND JOINT ACTION BY ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO THIS END;
- AFFIRMED THE IMPORTANCE OF TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFER;
- NOTED DISCUSSIONS OF PORTUGUESE INTENTIONS TO ENTER THE

EEC AND VENEZUELAN PARTICIPATION IN, AND POSSIBLE PORTUGUESE COOPERATION WITH, THE LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM (SELA);
--INCLUDED A CALL BY PEREZ FOR A RESTRUCTURED SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN BASIC PRODUCTS WHICH WOULD INCREASE THE INCOME OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD;
--EXPRESSED THE NEED FOR CLOSER CONSULTATIONS ON IMMIGRATION AND THE UTILIZATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES; AND
--ANNOUNCED A FEASIBILITY STUDY OF SOCIAL SECURITY RECIPROCITY.

5. FEW TANGIBLE RESULTS: DESPITE THE RHETORICAL FLOURISHES, TANGIBLE RESULTS WERE MEAGER. THEY INCLUDED:
--TWO BILATERAL ACCORDS, ONE ON ECONOMIC-INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND THE SECOND ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION. TEXTS HAVE NOT BEEN RELEASED;
--A PROMISE OF VENEZUELAN (READ OPEC) "FINANCIAL FACILITIES" TO PORTUGAL FOR OIL PURCHASES;
--A VERBAL COMMITMENT FROM PEREZ TO EXPAND PORTUGUESE IMMIGRATION. ONE LISBON NEWSPAPER REPORTED VENEZUELAN WILLINGNESS TO TAKE AN ADDITIONAL 300 FAMILIES IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS;
--STATEMENTS BY PEREZ SUPPORTING EXPANDED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE VENEZUELAN INVESTMENT IN PORTUGAL;
--AN INVITATION TO PRESIDENT EANES TO VISIT VENEZUELA AT A MUTUALLY-CONVENIENT TIME.

6. NEXT STEPS: MORE SIGNIFICANTLY PERHAPS, THE VISIT LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR FURTHER EXPANSION OF BILATERAL RELATIONS.
--PRESIDENT EANES AND POSSIBLY PRIME MINISTER SOARES WILL BE VISITING VENEZUELA.
--COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC MISSIONS FROM CARACAS ARE EXPECTED IN PORTUGAL IN THE NEAR FUTURE.
--A MEDIA INTEREST HAS BEEN CREATED IN BOTH CAPITALS.
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7. COMMENT: DESPITE THE PAUCITY OF CONCRETE RESULTS, THE VISIT WAS A SOLID POLITICAL SUCCESS. FROM THE PORTUGUESE STANDPOINT, THE VISIT WAS A USEFUL VEHICLE FOR:
--HIGHLIGHTING THE STRENGTH OF PORTUGAL'S LINKS WITH LATIN AMERICA AND THE THIRD WORLD.
--DEMONSTRATING GOP INTEREST IN OVERSEAS PORTUGUESE RESIDING IN VENEZUELA AND ELSEWHERE.
--REINFORCING PORTUGUESE CLAIMS TO BEING A PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTOR BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE THIRD WORLD.

THE CONTENTS OF THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE SUGGEST THAT VENEZUELAN POLITICAL INTERESTS WERE AT LEAST AS WELL SERVED.
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